

28. The need for appointing an expert to discover a proper remedy for the cocoanut palm disease which is rapidly spreading in the Kartikapalli taluk.

MR. KANAKKU MADHAVAN PILLAI NARAYANA PILLAI (*Kartikapalli taluk*) said that many cocoanut trees in the Kartikapalli taluk had decayed owing to the plant pest and in the case of many trees the yield had been considerably reduced. Consequently 95 per cent. of the men who were dependent on cocoanut trees were driven to abject penury. The Director of Agriculture and his staff were not able to improve this state of affairs by finding out ways for combating the plant disease. It was therefore highly necessary for the Government to get down an expert who would be able to find out a cure for the evil. Any amount spent on that account would not be a loss as it would materially improve the position of the ryot.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Narayana Pillai, I understand that there are several forms of cocoanut disease and our Agricultural Department has, by investigations in the past, discovered the root cause of all those diseases except the root disease. Perhaps you will say, it is the root disease that is causing havoc. That is really a disease which is found to be causing loss not only in Travancore but in other countries such as Ceylon and Java, where cocoanut palms exist. In those countries also, as here, the departments concerned are trying their best to find out the cause and some remedies for curing it. They too, it is known, have not yet succeeded in finding out either the cause or the remedy. However, in order to supplement what the department is doing, there is a proposal under the consideration of Government, for sending the departmental Mycologist to Ceylon, to find out what that Government is doing, so that, if any new lines of investigation are found to be followed there, they might be utilised here to supplement our investigations. I do not think there is any great use in going to the very heavy expense of Rs. 3,000 or Rs. 4,000 a month mainly for the purpose of getting an expert here, because other rich Governments like Ceylon are doing it and the result of their work will be available to us too.

Let us hope that scientific investigation will be able to find out this enemy of the cocoanut palm and a means of destroying it. The Government and the Agricultural Department are, as you yourself said, doing all that is possible in this direction. Now the Agricultural Director tells me that, even in the case of the diseases for which remedies have been discovered, unless there is the hearty co-operation of the people and the department, and unless the remedy suggested by the department is applied by the people, the diseases cannot be successfully combated.

29. The Travancore Government and Co-operative Societies.

MR. KRISHNAN UNNITHAN KESAVAN UNNITHAN (*Kunnathur taluk*) spoke about the working of the Co-operative Societies Regulation. He said that it was gratifying that the Dewan had